



Birch Rock Camp
Waterford ME
www.birchrock.org

The Council

Of Birch Rock Camp

December Issue 2007



Interview with Ryan Massey

Ryan 'Ryno' Massey spoke with Council head Francie Campbell recently. He called from his new home on the outskirts of Provo, Utah. After camp ended last summer Ryan moved from Arizona to start his new job at Outback Therapeutic Expeditions, a wilderness program for troubled teenagers. Ryan and his girlfriend Kathryn (who paid her first visit to Birch Rock last summer) keep five horses at their property close to farms and a beautiful lakefront.

Since revitalizing BRC's camp craft program seven years ago, Ryan now ensures that every new camper gets his knife and fire rights. Ryan, a three-dimensional artist and graduate of Rhode Island School of Design, initially worked as a designer of custom home furnishings. But after his first summer at the Rock in 2000, he changed the course of his life: "I realized I needed to work with kids and that would be my art form." Last year he finished his Masters in Secondary Education with a concentration in art. As Ryan explained, he sees art as 'his essential tie' for everything he wants to do.

Ryan and twin brother Blake (a former BRC nature instructor) celebrated their 30th birthday last February with a trip to Antarctica, where Ryan had perhaps his wildest wilderness adventure ever---he took the plunge to swim with penguins!

We salute the man who each summer grooms a new cadre of CITs, thrills campers with Geronimo, and sparks imaginations with flint and steel---Ryno Massey.

FC: If you could help the CITs understand one thing as you train them, what would that be?

RM: The more they put in, the more they'll get out. Birch Rock Camp is a reciprocal system.

FC: Why should boys learn to use knives and how to light fires? Aren't those skills antiquated?

RM: These skills are more relevant in this age of lack of contact with cause and effect items like knives and fire. These things are very true to their nature. Also, it builds a lot of confidence in boys to safely use something dangerous.

FC: If all the Birch Rock parents came together to hear you speak, what would you tell them?

RM: Trust that your kids will do well at camp. Every kid has the potential to be a star at Birch Rock.

FC: What kinds of things did you like to do as a boy?

RM: Lots of playing in the backyard, bike riding, looking for adventure, being kind of a dork.

FC: How did your parents influence you and Blake [brother now working in wildlife conservation in Micronesia]?

RM: My parents always supported me in any endeavor. My father was a professor and my mother a long-time teacher. It wasn't about us being rich---it was about us loving our work. They do worry about me in the woods--- a mountain lion attacking or something like that!

FC: Where do you see yourself in ten years?

RM: I see myself working at a university, teaching fine arts and outdoor skills. This winter I need to think about what I want to do for a dissertation. I'd like to be in a doctoral program in the next five years.

FC: Do you ever resent your strong attachment to Birch Rock? You have to organize your life around getting back each summer.

RM: No. It fuels me. The change of pace, the return each summer is always welcome. The first few years I always felt like I was juggling things, but not any more. And everybody knows I'm going to be back at Birch Rock.

FC: What would you say to the trustees of the camp?

RM: Birch Rock's heart lies in its traditions, and one of those traditions is in the roughness of the woods. Birch Rock needs to keep that raw feeling to the land.

FC: What's at the root of kids' troubles these days?

RM: It's a harder, faster world to grow up in. And it gets harder and faster every day.

Stay tuned for more staff interviews in the future.



Creating, Caring and Sharing with our Community

In the spirit of *Help the Other Fellow and the holidays*, a few Birch Rock boys, their families and friends gathered at the home of Will and Curtis Alexander to celebrate the season. On November 18th, about thirty people came together to build baskets for seniors in the Waterford community.

The boys and their families donated items such as toiletries, books and food to fill 8 baskets for those in need. Mike ushered the boys to the basement for some camp craft and they emerged with wood burned ornaments to adorn the baskets with! The baskets will be delivered to the senior citizens of Waterford in time for the holidays.

The day was a great success, providing all with a chance to catch up, hang out and give back to the community. A huge *thank you* to Rich, Mike, the Smith, Doran, Ray, Ingraham, Foley, Sullivan and host Alexander families who contributed to make the season special for those in need!

Quotes received from the 2007 season

Campers:

"I just had a blast at Birch Rock and already have my bags packed for next year."

-Alexander (11 year old)

"It was a needed experience"

-Mason (11 year old)

"The best summer of my life."

-Connor (13 year old)

Parents:

"Joe came home feeling independent and proud of himself and, that was our goal!"

-Annie

"Both boys are more independent and confident but with a genuine appreciation for home and parents and friends."

-Jen

"He always enjoys his summer at camp, but this year was exceptional due in part to MWA."

-Gretchen



Brewster Health Lodge....Bringing Tradition & Innovation Together

Waterford – The foundation, workers and your support are all in motion! Thanks to those who have supported this incredible capital improvement to our hillside campus. The Brewster Health Lodge construction project was launched last month.

To date, the Birch Rock Community has raised approximately \$220,000 of our \$300,000 Campaign Goal! The Brewster Health Lodge Campaign has \$80,000 more to go..... We generously ask for your support in funding this health facility scheduled to open for summer 2008. Please join us in helping to ensure the good health of Birch Rock and its campers by pledging your support. You can visit our website www.birchrock.org to follow our progress and find Gifting information or contact us at (207) 741-2930.

Upcoming Fellowship Gatherings & Camp Fairs

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| January 13 | Masaconomet Summer Fair - Boxford, MA | 12 -3 PM |
| January 16 | Summer Camp Fair – Lexington, MA | 5 – 7 PM |
| January 24 | Gathering @ The Sullivans – Cape Elizabeth, ME | 7 – 8 PM |
| January 26 | Winter Trustee Meeting – Boston, MA | 12 – 4 PM |
| February 2 | Summerscape Camp Fair – Beverly, MA | 12 -3 PM |
| February 7 | Gathering @ Dreyer Koffmans – Newton, MA | 7 – 8 PM |
| February 9 | Summer Camp Fair – Sudbury, MA | 12 – 3 PM |

Please contact birchrock@aol.com for further information about these events and /or potential gatherings in your area.